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Among some historical buildings recognized for cultural heritage preservation, an enchanting panoramic view of Zaycho Market and the city clock tower in Mandalay.

7,000+ properties listed for cultural heritage preservation

Over 7,000 heritage buildings preserving architectural, historical and cultural heritage value have been protected across the country under the Protection and Preservation of Ancient Monuments Law 2015, said U Aung Aung Kyaw, director of the Department of Archaeology and National Museum (Administration Division). **SEE PAGE 10**

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2,000 more shade trees to be planted at Mt Popa

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Preparations underway for Martyrs' Day Ceremony, Bogyoke Aung San Museum

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Myanmar's Pathein parasol business needs preservation as artisans dwindle

Over 100,000 tourists visit Myanmar by air from January to May 2024

ACCORDING to the Directorate of Hotels and Tourism, over 100,000 tourists entered Myanmar by air during the five months from January to May 2024, with the majority originating from China and Thailand. Compared to the number of tourists during the same period in 2023, this year's figure has increased by over a thousand.



International travellers seen arriving at the Yangon International Airport.

"They visited Myanmar with business or tourist visas to explore destinations in Yangon, Bago, and Bagan," an official from the Directorate of Hotels and Tourism said.

Overseas tourists visited beach areas less frequently during the first five months of this year, with many Thai tourists opting to visit the Bago area instead. In 2023, more than one million overseas tourists visited Myanmar, according to the Directorate of Hotels and Tourism. — ASH/TKO

NATIONAL

Bank Holiday

ALL Banks will be closed on 18th (Tuesday) June 2024 "Eid Al Adha (Qurbani Eid)" day, being public holiday under the Negotiable Instruments Act.

Central Bank of Myanmar



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The photo depicts the beauty of the protected Thayet Taunggyi public mangrove forest.

Thayet Taunggyi protected public mangrove forest designated for biodiversity preservation

THE Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation (MoNREC), exercising authority under Section 6 (e) of the Forest Law enacted in 2018, declared 601.6 acres of land in Thayetchaung Township of Dawei District in Taninthayi Region as the "Thayet Taunggyi protected public mangrove forest" through Notification 47/2024 (7

June 2024). The ministry designates protected public forests and forest reserves to maintain the ecosystem of mangrove forests, enriching the diverse biological species, protect against natural disasters by serving as natural barriers, provide seafood for local communities, and improve the administration of mangrove

forest ecosystems. The benefits of protecting the Thayet Taunggyi mangrove forest include conserving mangrove woodlands, preserving habitats for bird species, improving the ecosystem for fish, and enhancing protection against disasters, as they are crucial for the stability of marine ecosystems. — MNA/TRKM

2,000 more shade trees to be planted at Mt Popa

AT Mount Popa, which is called the oasis of Anya (central Myanmar), 2,000 shade trees will be planted, according to the Yenatha Dinger Brothers social welfare group.

As of 2019, the local philanthropic group initiated this project with about 10,000 trees at Mount Popa. Some of those trees are getting taller than humans, and now, they plan to grow more trees.

"We went to observe the location for growing trees at Mount Popa last week. We will need to choose the types of trees. Yellow Champa (Sagawa) and mango trees, which are able to survive, will be included. We started growing trees at Mount Popa in around 2019 and 2020 and planted about 10,000 trees. This year, we will

plant more than 2,000 trees because we have initiated similar projects in Yenangyoung and Chauk townships. In particular, we will grow trees for humans, monkeys, and birds to help them take shelter and eat fruits. Mango can be eaten by both visitors and monkeys," said Ko Yenatha Dinger from the parahita group.

Furthermore, 10,000 perennials have been slated to grow inside and outside of a Parahita park located by Yenangyoung and Magway Road during this monsoon season.

Yenatha Dinger Brothers is a Parahita group that builds lakes, Zayats (resting halls), and roadside drinking water pots (Yaychanzins) in Yenangyoung Township and surrounding areas. — Thit Taw/ZS



The green landscape of Mount Popa and some planted trees.

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Signing Ceremony of the Agreement on Transfer of Funds for MLC Special Fund (2024) Projects held in Nay Pyi Taw to commemorate 74th Anniversary of Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Myanmar and China

The signing ceremony of the Agreement on the Transfer of Funds for Mekong-Lancang Cooperation Special Fund (2024) Projects was held in Nay Pyi Taw in commemoration of the 74th Anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and the People's Republic of China. The ceremony took place at the M Gallery Hotel, Nay Pyi Taw, on the morning of 14 June 2024.

Deputy Prime Minister and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs U Than Swe, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Myanmar Mr Chen Hai, Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture U Tin Oo Lwin, Union Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation U Min Naung, Union Minister for Cooperatives and Rural Development U Hla Moe, Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Khin Maung Yi, Union Minister for Industry Dr Charlie Than, Union Minister for Science and Technology Dr Myo Thein Kyaw, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Lwin Oo and senior officials from concerned ministries were also present at the ceremony.

At the ceremony, Deputy Prime Minister and Union



Deputy Prime Minister MoFA Union Minister U Than Swe, Union Ministers and the Chinese Ambassador are pictured at yesterday's agreement-signing event in Nay Pyi Taw.

Minister for Foreign Affairs U Than Swe delivered the opening speech in which he praised the long-standing Pauk-Phaw friendship as well as the establishment of diplomatic relations between Myanmar and China on 8 June 1950, which reached the "Comprehensive Strategic Cooperation Partnership" in 2011 and further elevated to the Myanmar-China Community for Shared Future in 2020 based on the peaceful coexistence policy. He also highlighted the success

of the Mekong-Lancang Cooperation due to the MLC Special Fund Projects started in 2017 with the sole contribution of China and expressed his appreciation to China for granting MLC Special Fund Projects to be implemented in seven cooperation areas under the MLC framework. He reiterated the commitment of Myanmar to work together with China and MLC countries to promote Peace, Prosperity and Stability of the MLC region with the

spirit of "Shared River, Shared Future".

Mr Chen Hai, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Myanmar, also delivered the opening remarks. In his speech, the Ambassador recalled the friendly Pauk-Phaw relations, mutual understanding, mutual respect and support between China and Myanmar. He highlighted the Mekong-Lancang Cooperation as a crucial platform for the two countries to jointly build a community with

a shared future in the new era. He also raised the willingness of China to continue strengthening bilateral and multilateral cooperation with Myanmar and other MLC countries and to support the implementation of MLC Special Fund Projects for the benefit of the Myanmar people.

Afterwards, the Agreement on the Transfer of Funds for MLC Special Fund (2024) Projects between Myanmar and China was signed and exchanged by U Lwin Oo, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and Mr Chen Hai, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China. In accordance with the Agreement, China will transfer over US\$3.6 million to Myanmar for 12 Mekong-Lancang Cooperation Special Fund Projects for the year 2024. The projects will be implemented in Myanmar by six line Ministries in the fields of agriculture and livestock, forest resources preservation, eco-innovation and green practices of MSMEs, village-level poverty reduction, ICT and innovation and cultural promotion. Myanmar has received a total of 118 projects in various areas with a total value of around US\$35 million from 2017 to 2024 through the MLC Special Fund supported by China. — MNA



Myanmar Charge d'Affaires calls on new Speaker of Vietnam's National Assembly

U SOE KO KO, Charge d'Affaires ad interim to Vietnam, paid a courtesy call on Mr Tran Thanh Man, the new Speaker of Vietnam's National Assembly, along with heads of missions from the ASEAN embassies and the Timor-Leste Embassy at the National Assembly Building of Vietnam on 13 June, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Mr Tran Thanh Man, a new Speaker of Vietnam's National Assembly, poses for the documentary photo with heads of missions from the ASEAN embassies.

During the meeting, Mr Tran Thanh Man expressed his gratitude for the congratulatory messages from leaders of the ASEAN member countries and Timor-Leste. At the same time, the heads of missions extended their congratulations to Mr Tran Thanh Man on assuming office as the new Speaker of Vietnam's National Assembly. The Speaker also expressed his commitment to enhancing collaboration between the Vietnamese National Assembly and its ASEAN counterparts. — ASH/MKKS

NATIONAL

As today is a knowledge age, students who actually pursue education will have deserved opportunities

THOSE who passed the matriculation exam for the 2023-24 Academic Year were honoured, and cash assistance was provided for offspring of the MoI staff in the 2024-25 Academic Year.

Union Minister U Maung Maung Ohn stressed the need for staff offspring to avoid the issues that can harm learning education in student life and to try their best to become intellectuals and intelligentsia to serve the interests of the State in the future. The Union minister spoke on the occasion of honouring the students who passed the matriculation examination in the 2023-24 academic year and providing cash assistance for the offspring of staff in the 2024-25 academic year at the Ministry of Information in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

Before the ceremony, a video clip, "Towards Development of the State from Education Promotion Endeavours", was presented.

In his speech, the Union minister said that the government is implementing the national education promotion plan to enable all citizens to complete



Union Minister U Maung Maung Ohn presents the award to an outstanding student yesterday.

basic education, turn out outstanding students in all sectors with the promotion of education meeting the international standard and emerge highly qualified

human resources.

He noted that as students will be leaders of the State in the future, they have to build themselves up to be educated with

high morality.

The Union minister underlined that students do not have enough just to learn education, and they have to study basic information technology and computer technology with proficiency in foreign languages.

He recounted that the Prime Minister had given guidance on the attendance of all school-age children at schools, completion of the KG+9 educational scheme and learning of basic education for all.

The Union minister underscored that students need to understand only when they have completed higher education will they enjoy an improvement in their lives.

The Union minister presented prizes to three outstanding students who passed the matriculation exam with five, four and three distinctions, respectively, in the 2023-24 AY. The wife of the Union minister also awarded outstanding students who secured distinctions in the matric examination. The deputy minister also distinguished the winning students.

The permanent secretary

and departmental heads presented cash assistance and stationery to students and offspring of staff from relevant departments for 2024-25 AY.

The staff of MRTV performed a one-act play, and the Union minister awarded K500,000 to them.

At the ceremony, the ministry presented cash assistance to 1,390 primary students, 564 middle school students, 500 high school students and 393 university students. K5,000 and one dozen notebooks each went to primary students, K7,500 and one dozen notebooks each to middle school students, K10,000 and two dozen school blank books each to high school students and K15,000 and two dozen school blank books to university students. It totalled K50,380,000.

A total of 36 students passed the matriculation examination in 2023-24 AY with eight one-distinction winners, three two-distinction winners, two three-distinction winners, one four-distinction winner and one five-distinction winner. Those students were awarded K55,080,000. — MNA/TTA

Counter-argument to false information

False claims: Security forces destroyed houses and motorbikes in Madaya

MALICIOUS news media are spreading false news that security forces operating in Madaya Township, Mandalay Region, raided South and Central Shinhla Villages and burned down 12 houses and more than 30 motorcycles on 12 June.

According to a resident, the truth is

that terrorists in the village threatened the people and placed landmines in some houses and roads used by the public in the village.

While the security forces were carrying out security operations to prevent the public from danger, terrorists came

and attacked with drop bombs.

Subversive media outlets are intentionally inciting and circulating false stories about the security forces in and around the areas where the security forces arrive in order to create illusions and fear among the public. — MNA/KZL



The screenshot validates misinformation.

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Specialists offer medical treatments to residents in Hpa-an on field trip

THE medical specialist teams including professors and physicians from Yangon, Mandalay and Nay Pyi Taw are offering the medical treatments in the States and Regions. Medical specialist teams from Yangon General Hospital, Yangon Specialist Hospital (500-bed) travelled to Hpa-an in Kayin State on 8 and 9 June and gave the medical treatment to local people.

Over the course of these medical trips, a total of 1,496 patients, including individuals from seven townships of Kay-

in State, two townships of Mon State and surrounding areas, received treatment for a range of medical conditions. These conditions encompassed cardiac diseases, gastrointestinal issues, neurological ailments, neurosurgery, among others.

The medical check-ups included various procedures such as Echocardiography, Oesophago-Gastro-Duodenoscopy (OGD) Scope, Colonoscopy, CT scans, glycated haemoglobin (HbA1c) tests, X-ray examinations, ultrasound scans, and



The specialist medical team pays treatment to a patient requiring the burr hole surgery in Hpa-an General Hospital.

electrocardiograms (ECG). The medical team provided treatment to two patients requiring neurosurgery.

Kayin State Chief Minister U Saw Myint Oo and officials comforted and provided nutri-

tional support to the patients. They also provided cash assistant for medical service of the specialist teams.

These medical specialist teams conducted field trips in 2024. These medical teams

have travelled to Taunggyi, Pyay, Thandwe, Pathein, Mawlamyine, Magway, Myeik, NyaungU, Myitkyina, Hinthada, Dawei and Kengtung. The medical team will travel to Kawthoung. — MNA/KZL

MNHRC inspects Twantay Myoma Police Lock-up, Mibagon Home for the Aged



Members of the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission view round the Mibagon Home for the Aged in Twantay Township, Yangon Region.

THE inspection team led by U Kyaw Soe and U Tin Aung, Members of the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission (MNHRC), inspected Twantay Myoma Police Lock-up and Mibagon Home for the Aged in Twantay Township, Yangon Region, yesterday in accordance with Sections 43 and 44 of the Commission Law.

While inspecting the Twantay Myoma Police Lock-up, the MNHRC team inspect-

ed the conditions of detainees during the remand period, including whether any torture occurred during investigation and there were opportunities to meet family members as well as the provision of food and drinking water, the handling of sewage, and the overall cleanliness of the facilities.

The inspection team inspected the Mibagon Home for the Aged under the MNHRC Law and procedures to find

out whether the residents were enjoying fundamental rights including health services, appropriate food, purified drinking water, right to freedom of religion, adequate dormitories and arrangements for leisure.

The MNHRC inspection team will inform the relevant department under the MNHRC Law its findings and recommendations for the necessary actions. — MNHRC

Illegal goods seized in various states/regions

SUPERVISED by the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee, action is being taken under the law against illicit trading across the nation.

The on-duty team managed by the Kayin State Illegal Trade Eradication Special Task Force nabbed a Higer bus (estimated value of K35 million), travelling from Hpa-an to Nay Pyi Taw, carrying four kinds of goods worth K11.335 million, including 600 bottles of Two Shrimps-brand palm oil (two litres each) from Thailand and 18 sacks of detergent each containing 25 kilogrammes without official documents at the Thanlwin Bridge (Tayokhla side) combined checkpoint on 12 June. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

On the same day, the combined team in Shan State captured 15 sets of all-in-one PC monitors worth K6 million that were smuggled and piled up by the side of the road over the Sinphyu checkpoint in Muse township and a Toyota Ipsum (estimated value of K20 million) carrying illegal teak weighing 0.895 tonne worth K787,600 near Milepost 45 on

the Yangon-Pyay Road in Taikkyi township. The action was taken under Customs procedures and the Forest Law.

During inspections on 12 and 13 June, the combined teams impounded three kinds of goods worth K22,377,423, including 5,409 kilogrammes of fishing net from Thailand in Kawthoung township, a Mitsubishi Fuso truck (approximately K30 million) carrying ten kinds of goods valued at K21,438,050 including 517 kilogrammes of mirror with frame from China without official documents in the Pyigyidagun township, 350 gallons of smuggled fuel oil valued at K3.36 million at the Kantalu combined checkpoint and illegal teak weighing 4.877 tonnes and illegal hardwood weighing 0.846 tonne valued at K2,591,069 in Pyay and Thayawady districts. The action was taken under Customs procedures, the Petroleum and Petroleum Products Law and the Forest Law.

Therefore, 13 arrests (estimated value of K152 million) were made on 12 and 13 June, according to the committee. — MNA/MKKS

NATIONAL



Yangon Chief Minister U Soe Thein inspecting preparations for Martyrs' Day.

Preparations underway for Martyrs' Day Ceremony, Bogyoke Aung San Museum

ACCORDING to the Yangon Region Government, preparations for the 77th Martyrs' Day, including those for the Martyrs' Mausoleum and the Bogyoke Aung San Museum, are currently underway.

Chief Minister of Yangon Region U Soe Thein inspected the preparations for the Martyrs' Mausoleum, the location of the ceremony,

the site where the public will pay their respects to the Martyrs, the cleanliness of the mausoleum's surroundings, and the VIP lounges on 13 June.

Furthermore, he also inspected the preparations for the Bogyoke Aung San Museum, which was the home of General Aung San and his family. — TWA/TRKM

Children's umbrellas sell well

IN this monsoon season, umbrellas for children have been sold more than umbrellas for adults.

This is school season, kid umbrella sales have been better than adult umbrellas, and orders for kid umbrellas from the Yangon market have been received, according to Mandalay's umbrella trading market.

"Umbrella trade is fine now. We deliver to all regions and states, including Yangon. Both adult and children's umbrellas have been sold well, though. The sale of children's umbrellas is better because this is school season,"

said an official from the Shwe Khit Thit umbrella retail and wholesale trading at Zaycho Market.

The sale of medium-sized and oversized adult umbrellas with attractive designs has been good. However, the sale of children's umbrellas has noticeably risen, and appealing designs have caught children's attention, he said.

It is anticipated that the sale of different kinds of umbrellas will increase during the period from May to October. However, umbrella trading was slow in the 2022 monsoon season. — Thit Taw/ZS



Images showcase some children's umbrellas being sold in the

Authorities receive 38 Myanmar nationals repatriated from India



During the process of repatriation of those who have already served their sentences in India at the Friendship Bridge crossing on the border between Tamu, Myanmar and India.

A total of 38 Myanmar nationals who had completed their sentences at Imphal prison in Manipur state, India, were transferred via the Myanmar-India border checkpoint in Tamu township, Sagaing Region, on 11 June.

Indian officials transferred them back to Myanmar, and Myanmar officials from the Tamu district administration accept-

ed them in accordance with the repatriation laws and policies of both countries. According to the Tamu district administration, Myanmar nationals were temporarily accommodated at the Miekwin monastery in Tamu township, where they underwent health tests and were provided with food and other necessary assistance. — TWA/MKKS

Growing interest among women in traditionally male seafaring professions

RECENTLY, many women have shown interest in seafaring jobs that were once reserved for men, according to Captain Soe Min Aung, president of the Myanmar Seafarers Federation (MSF).

Most of these women work in catering, kitchen and room services on board.

"Most of the people from the ordinary class cannot afford to go abroad or attend school in a foreign country. So, they go abroad as common workers. Then, many women turn to seafaring. They work on passenger ships. As this opportunity opens up, many of them rush to it. They become interested in such jobs," he said.

There are now about 700 women sailors who have attended seafarer training courses and obtained passports.

"Since after 1988, when almost everyone could apply for a passport, they have been working on passenger ocean liners. But, they went abroad to work as hotel staff. According to a 2006 Maritime Labour Convention's provision, all people working on ships must be seafarers. Those who work on a cruise ship under a hotel must also be seafarers. When they went as hotel staff,

such as waitresses, homemakers, cleaners and receptionists, there were no problems. But, to become a sailor, there are some requirements. So, these women will have to go through all training courses related to seafarers and obtain a seafarer ID. Thereby, they can apply for passports. So far, there are about 700 women sailors," he said. — MT/ZN



Women attending a knowledge-sharing session given by female seafarers with experience of working onboard cruise ships.

7,000 companies fail to file AR in Jan-May 2024

SEVEN thousand companies were struck off the Register in the past five months this year (January-May) as they failed to submit annual returns (AR) on the online registry system, MyCO, according to the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

DICA's statistics showed that 750 companies in January 2024, 600 in February, 1,650 in March and 2,000 each in April and May did not file the AR.

DICA notified any registered company that fails to file its AR on the MyCO that it is to be struck off the Register from the date of the directive, under 430 (F) of the Myanmar Companies Law, according to the DICA's notification.

A total of 6,400 companies also failed to submit the AR in 2023. The registration and re-registration of companies on the MyCO website commenced on 1 August 2018, in keeping



The front view of the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

with the Myanmar Companies Law 2017.

All registered companies need to submit AR on the MyCO registry system within two months of incorporation and at least once every year (not later than one month after the

anniversary of the incorporation), according to Section 97 of the law.

Under Section 266 (A) of the Myanmar Companies Law 2017, public companies must submit annual returns and financial statements (G-5) si-

multaneously. All overseas corporations must submit ARs in the prescribed format on MyCO within 28 days of the financial year ending under Section 53 (A-1) of the Myanmar Companies Law 2017.

As per DICA's report, thou-

sands of companies were suspended for failing to submit AR forms before the due date. Newly established companies are required to submit ARs within two months of incorporation or face a fine of K100,000 for filing late returns.

DICA has notified that any company which fails to submit its AR within 13 months will be notified of its suspension (I-9A). If it fails to submit the AR within 28 days of receiving the notice, the system will show the company's status as suspended. Companies can restore their status only after shelling out a fine of K50,000 for the AR fee, K100,000 for restoration of the company on the Register, and K100,000 for late filing of documents, totalling K250,000. If a company fails to restore its status within six months of suspension, the registrar will strike its name off the Register, according to the DICA notice. — NN/EM

Myanmar-Thailand border trade nears US\$500M in April-May

MYANMAR'S border trade with the neighbouring country Thailand was estimated at US\$495 million as of 10 May of the current financial year 2024-2025.

The figures plunged from \$829.6 million recorded in the year-ago period, indicating a sharp drop of \$334.6 million.

Myanmar conducts cross-border trade with Thailand via the Tachilek, Myawady,

Kawthoung, Myeik, Hteekhee and Mawtaung border. Of them, the Hteekhee border performed the most extensive trade worth over \$316.54 million in the past two months.

Moreover, the trade values stood at \$50.95 million at Myawady border post, \$44.64 million at Tachilek, over \$35.45 million at Myeik, \$39.38 million at Kawthoung and over \$8 million at Mawtaung.

Myanmar carries out border trade with neighbouring countries such as China, Thailand, Bangladesh, and India. It exports agricultural products, livestock products, fisheries, minerals, forest products, finished industrial goods, and other goods, while it brings in capital goods, intermediate goods, consumer goods, and raw materials from the CMP enterprises. — NN/KK

Myanmar businesspeople invited to join India Steel Expo 2025 in Mumbai

INDIA Steel Expo, which will take place on 24-26 April 2025 in Mumbai, India, welcomes the participation of Myanmar business people, according to the Myanmar Embassy in New Delhi.

The expo will bring a platform to connect with international steel manufacturers, showcase equipment, discuss

the latest trends and technology in steel and related industries, explore market opportunities, and join B2B meetings and conferences with Indian governmental institutions.

For further details, individuals can visit the web portal: www.indiasteelexpo.in. — NN/KK

Myanmar exports over 47,700MT of fisheries in April-May

OF fisheries products placed in the external market in the past two months (April-May) 2024, various fish accounts for 47,719.523 metric tonnes worth US\$51.6 million, comprising 23,687.149 tonnes in maritime trade and 24,032.374 tonnes at the border, the Fisheries Department's statistics showed.

The figures rose from 19,593.73 MT worth \$26.946

million recorded in the corresponding period last FY 2023-2024.

Myanmar exports fisheries products, including fish and shrimp, to more than 40 countries, including China, Thailand, Bangladesh and Japan. Some are directly shipped through Yangon, while some are shipped through border channels. — TWA/KK



Fish being sorted for export processing.

OPINION

Leverage up anti-money laundering, countering financing of terrorism

ENHANCING anti-money laundering (AML) and countering the financing of terrorism (CFT) measures is critical in dismantling criminal networks and preventing transnational crimes. Targeting the illicit profits of illegal enterprises can diminish criminal activity and contribute to economic development, financial stability, and organizational integrity. Additionally, it supports the United Nations' sustainable development goals.

Global financial integrity is vital for ensuring financial stability, inclusiveness, and the maintenance of peace and security. Authorities must recognize that effective implementation of AML and CFT measures is essential for all. This requires strengthening cross-border AML efforts, as international collaboration is necessary to combat crimes that transcend borders. Authorities must identify and seize financial sources and assets that support criminal operations as part of their preventive strategies.

Myanmar's law enforcement agencies must prioritize combatting cross-border money laundering and terrorist financing while eliminating illegal trade practices. By disrupting the financing mechanisms of terrorism, they can restore peace and stability. Effective activities of anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism can eradicate illegal trade and smuggling, revitalizing the national economy.

Money laundering and terrorist financing contribute to global instability, terrorism, and exploitation in all sectors worldwide. Preserving global financial integrity is crucial for enhancing worldwide peace and security. Assisting countries struggling with AML and CFT implementation is necessary, as is increasing cooperation between public authorities and the private sector. A government-private sector partnership can significantly enhance the effectiveness of these initiatives.

Myanmar's law enforcement agencies must prioritize combatting cross-border money laundering and terrorist financing while eliminating illegal trade practices. By disrupting the financing mechanisms of terrorism, they can restore peace and stability. Effective activities of anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism can eradicate illegal trade and smuggling, revitalizing the national economy.

As such, strengthening anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism efforts is fundamental in fighting criminal networks and transnational crimes. By targeting the financial gains of illegal enterprises, promoting global financial integrity, and fostering international cooperation, authorities in all global countries can ensure economic development, financial stability, and security.

Enhanced public-private partnerships and international support will further bolster these efforts, contributing a great deal towards global peace and stability. For Myanmar, relevant law enforcement bodies have to prioritize aforesaid measures not only to combat illegal trade and financing of terrorism but also to restore economic growth and stability of the nation.

Undeniable Facts of Narcotics Smuggling by AA Group

By Min Khant

THE AA group, which is being monitored and taken action by international organizations, including the UN, for the recent killing of Bengali people and arson attacks against Bengali villages, is an insurgent terrorist group which is largely undertaking narcotics smuggling.

The AA group, which has emerged in the KIA area since 2009, has primarily earned income to stand on its own from narcotics smuggling like its godfathers KIA, UWSA, MNDAA and TNLA. Actually, the AA group has neither firm businesses nor money from extortion from the Rakhine people since its establishment. It has mainly relied on the income earned from drug smuggling to purchase food, arms and ammunition.

Like the course of insurgents of terrorists in the northeastern part of Shan State, the AA group has made manufacture, distribution and sale of illicit drugs as its major business. It is undertaking narcotics smuggling both at home and abroad. Accordingly, it is witnessed that the involvement of AA members in frequent seizures of drug-trafficking.

According to the records of seizures of narcotics by the Myanmar Police Force, there had been MMK294.82 billion (over USD1,400 million) worth of nine seizures of AA-related drug smugglings between 2016 and March 2024. For evident example, authorities had seized MMK51.87 billion (over

USD24 million) worth of 2.07 tonnes of ICE (Crystal Meth) and 800 kilogrammes of prohibited chemical caffeine between 3 and 9 December 2023. In that case, a drug-related gang which comprises of four officers of AA, three other ranks of AA and eight civilians were arrested. The gang is manipulated by Kyaw Myat Oo (aka) Mg Naing (aka) Thar Thar (aka) Wai Thar Tun, a trusted person as well as a person in charge of earners for AA who is at the rank of Colonel in AA, as per the instruction of AA Leader Twan Mrat Naing.

According to the confession of AA members under interrogation, the AA group transports ICE (Crystal Meth) stimulant tablets manufactured by ethnic armed organizations (EAOs) in Shan State to Rakhine State by road and sea through Mandalay and Yangon. Again, the AA group distributes those drugs in Rakhine State and Bangladesh's border areas. Next, it smuggles drugs to Malaysia and Indonesia by Rakhine waters. Finally, it mainly smuggles drugs to other foreign markets through Malaysia and Indonesia.

Among those tasked with AA's illegal drug trade, the majority of people are AA Leader Twan Mrat Naing's confidants, who are working at AA Headquarters in Laiza, KIA's area. The arrestees did not carry out drug trafficking for personal interests, but they did it for the AA group as a duty. They

receive higher salaries and opportunities than other AA members. Their tasks are sectioned into transporting, carrying and selling. The benefits earned from drug trafficking are used under the management of AA Leader Twan Mrat Naing. He contacts with arms trafficking gangs and exchanges weapons with stimulant tablets. Some 70 per cent of income earned from drug trafficking is used for purchasing arms and ammunition.

The AA group's drug market is connected with international drug gangs in European countries, including the US and Middle Eastern countries through Malaysia and Bangladesh. As the main route, the stimulant tablets and ICE (Crystal Meth) that are produced in EAOs' controlled areas of northern and northeastern parts of Myanmar is transported through Mandalay. Again, Yangon ports are used to transport those drugs to foreign countries. The drug trafficking is then made to Malaysia and Indonesia by sea. As an overland route, the AA group is making drug smuggling to Bangladesh through Mandalay, Meiktila, Pyawbwe, Magway, Padan, Kyauktaw and Mrauk-U.

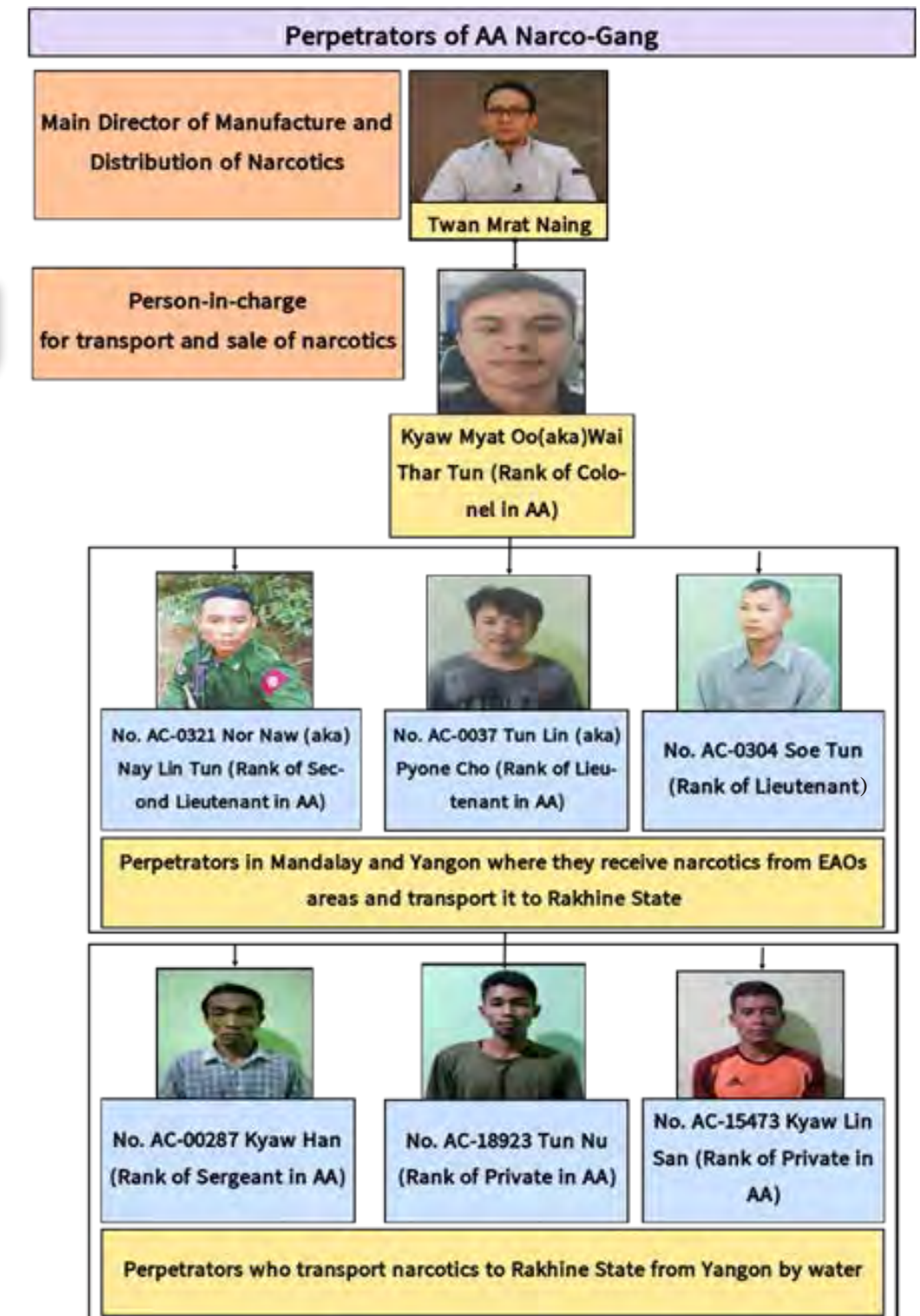
According to the records of the Department of Narcotics Control (DNC) in Bangladesh, the number of people who abuse stimulant tablets is around eight million. Over the past three years, it has been

included in the list of the top five countries on the yearly seizure of stimulant tablets (Yaba). The DNC team seized more than 50 million stimulant tablets every year. The 2021 report by the DNC team stated that the seized stimulant tablets have been transported into Bangladesh from AA's controlled areas, and the AA members are involved in the drug-related cases behind the seizures.

Following the emergence of the AA group, stimulant tablets (Yaba) become plentiful in Rakhine State. As a result, Rakhine youths, as well as those from Bengali refugee camps at the border area with Bangladesh, have become increased. Particularly, the stimulant tablet abuses were much in evidence among the AA members who died in some battles. The AA group reportedly forced its members to use narcotics for armed combat.

Even though the AA armed terrorist group is formed with the majority of Rakhine people, all innocent Rakhine people do not accept it, and it does not represent Rakhine State and its people. It is led by a group of extreme racists of Rakhine people who are treading down Rakhine State and people for their personal interests. The AA group is just an armed narco-terrorist group which disturbs the peace and stability of Rakhine State and carries out illegal drug trade largely.

With extreme racism and illegal drug



Seizure of narcotics along with AA members in December 2023

trade, the AA group comes to build up. Thus, they have evidently started to kill and torture Bengali people in Rakhine State.

In the past, security personnel made utmost efforts to stabilize the areas in Rakhine State, making balance in accordance with the laws in communal conflicts between Rakhine and Bengali people. After security personnel were absent from the areas, the lawless atrocities by the AA group against locals have obviously emerged. As a result, the international community has become fully aware of the atrocities.

In fact, global countries have come to pay attention to the AA terrorist group because it has killed Bengali people and torched Bengali villages in Buthidaung and Maungtaw areas, Rakhine State. It earns money from drug trafficking and is going on the course of armed terrorist attacks. This article serves to highlight dangerous AA drug lords who endanger all human beings and lets the international community know about it.

The AA group's drug trafficking is undeniable because there has been strong evidence and eye-witnesses. I'd like to urge the international community not to support the AA armed terrorist group, which is generating its major income from the cultivation, manufacture, distribution and sale of illicit drugs.

The Government has intensified its efforts to combat narcotics, regarding as a national duty. Likewise, it can be seen that the Government is emphasizing the seizure of drug trafficking, blocking the AA group's drug trade route. According to the confessions of drug-related perpetrators and evidence, the drug trade of the AA group is undeniable. Moreover, this article exposes that the AA group is also connecting with drug lords, illegal arms trafficking and transnational human trafficking from foreign countries.

NATIONAL

Myanmar's Pathein parasol business needs preservation as artisans dwindle

SINCE the number of artisans in Myanmar's traditional Pathein parasol business dwindles, people want it to be preserved to prevent it from disappearing, according to the parasol business circle.

Due to high prices and scarcity of raw materials, some professionals have quit the parasol business and moved to other better jobs, so it may die out if it is not supported, they said.

"Ours is a small-scale parasol business at home. Now, some professionals have stopped their business. Some have switched



A Myanmar girl painting Pathein parasols at the final stage.

to seasonal part-time work. That is because raw materials such as wood and bamboo are expensive and difficult to find. When they sell after making parasols, they cannot fetch a good price. The main point is more expensive raw materials. Cutting wood and bamboo can only be done in season. It isn't easy. The profit margin is small, and the price cannot be raised suddenly. So, they have to think a lot. Some have given up this umbrella business and moved on to other available casual work. The number of professionals is

gradually decreasing. This business is dying out," said an official from the Ananta Myitta Pathein Parasol Business in Pathein.

Sales were good in May, but the market is slow during the rainy season, while the peak season is between October and April.

"Sales are good in summer. Demand and supply for Pathein parasols used to be good. Their season is between October and April. It is still good in May. It always sells well in its season every year," he said. — Thit Taw/ZN

ME in Cairo warns nationals in Egypt to renew stay permits on time

MYANMAR nationals in Egypt will need to make sure the validity of their stay permit is met in time, as penalties will follow if it is late, the Myanmar Embassy to the Arab Republic of Egypt urged.

The embassy said in a statement that the General Authority of Passport, Immigration and Nationality already announced in January 2024 that foreigners living in Egypt would have to validate their stay permit during their stay there.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Arab Republic of Egypt has warned that all foreigners in Egypt shall make the application for a resident card, not later than 30 June 2024 at the General Authority

of Passport, Immigration and Nationality, the statement said.

Therefore, of Myanmar nationals who have been living in Egypt for various reasons, those who haven't received resident cards or, if they expired, will need to make sure it by 30 June 2024, said the statement.

The statement said the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has notified that the Egyptian government would commence actions from 30 September 2024 onwards against foreigners who didn't make resident card applications. Those studying in Egypt will need to willingly accept having examined their resident card as well as student ID card issued by respective schools or universities. — MT/ZS



The stunning facade of the National Library in Yangon.

7,000+ properties listed for cultural heritage preservation

FROM PAGE 1

Those cultural heritage buildings are preserved under three effective heritage conservation practices.

The Protection and Preservation of Cultural Heritage Zones Law was enacted in 1998. Myanmar keeps preserving ancient buildings that hold immense value in terms of history, culture, and architecture but are not located within the cultural heritage sites under the Protection

and Preservation of Ancient Monuments Law 2015. Prior to the enactment of those laws, more than 6,800 ancient buildings were preserved in 1972. After that, over 240 more buildings were added to the heritage conservation list. The law covers over 100-year-old properties. The old buildings should be preserved depending on their cultural symbolism, historical significance, and architectural value. Over 200 more buildings

were found for preservation in late 2022 in different regions and states. This year, 39 more buildings were added to the heritage conservation list," U Aung Aung Kyaw elaborated.

Those 39 newly listed heritage buildings recognized in March 2024 are located in Nay Pyi Taw Council area (one building), Mandalay Region (eight), Yangon Region (eight), Ayeyawady Region (12) and Rakhine State (10). — ASH/KK



The Myanmar Embassy in Cairo.

SUMMARIES: LIFESTYLE

Supreme Court stays release of 'Hamare Baarah' movie

THE Supreme Court on Thursday put a stay on the release of the Annu Kapoor starrer movie 'Hamare Baarah' and asked the Bombay High Court to decide expeditiously a petition alleging that the film was derogatory to the Islamic faith and married Muslim women.

A vacation bench of Justice Vikram Nath and Justice Sandeep Mehta halted the release of the film till the disposal of the petition challenging the movie's certification. The movie was scheduled to release on 14 June. The apex court was hearing a plea challenging the order of the Bombay High Court permitting the release of the movie. — ANI

Japan's escargot entrepreneur achieves the 'impossible'

FAR from Parisian bistros serving up Burgundy snails, one Japanese man has figured out how to farm the slimy species — a feat that has long eluded the French.

Toshihide Takase, 76, says he is "the only person in the world" breeding this specific delicacy after four decades of trial and error to find the right conditions. French embassy and industry insiders also believe that Takase, who has invested a small fortune and taught himself everything about the creature, is a unique case.

Stuffed with butter, garlic and parsley then baked, Burgundy snails — or escargots de Bourgogne — have been part of French gastronomy since the 19th century. — AFP

US Mission to India receives skyrocketing student visa demand

THE US Mission to India has received skyrocketing demand for student visas, as the Indian consular team interviewed 3,900 student visa applicants during its 8th annual Student Visa Day on Thursday. "On 13 June 2024, Consular Team India interviewed 3,900 student visa applicants during its 8th annual Student Visa Day.

Mission India highlights our strong commitment to higher education in the United States and the growing educational ties between the United States and India by organizing robust programming for Student Visa Day, where Mission members and Education USA colleagues interact with applicants to share information on studying in the United States," the US Embassy to India said in a press release. — ANI

Accelerate efforts for healthy ageing: World Health Organization

Nations are actively engaging in efforts aligned with the United Nations Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021-2030), which aligns with Sustainable Development Goals.



Healthy ageing refers to the process of growing older in a way that maintains physical, mental, and social well-being, allowing individuals to live full, active lives with independence and dignity. **PHOTO: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/ ISTOCK**

EXPERTS and officials from ministries of health, social welfare and empowerment from countries in the WHO South-East Asia Region discussed measures to improve health and care services for older persons and a Regional Strategy on Healthy Ageing during a three-day meeting that concluded in New Delhi

on 13 June, the World Health Organization said in a press release.

"Today, 12.6 per cent of our Region is aged 60 or above. By the year 2030, this will jump to nearly 14 per cent, and by 2050 it will reach a staggering 23.6 per cent. Managing this demographic shift presents challenges, yet also represents

an opportunity. Older individuals, when equipped with good health and well-being, can play active roles in the workforce, contribute to the economy through various means, and pass on invaluable wisdom and experience to younger generations," Saima Wazed, Regional Director WHO South-East Asia, said. — ANI



In the latest season of 'Bridgerton', fans have been treated to a whirlwind of scandalous revelations and emotional rollercoasters. **PHOTO: ANI**

'Bridgerton's Nicola Coughlan praises "evil butterfly" Cressida's 'Whistledown' portrayal

IN a whirlwind of scandalous revelations and emotional rollercoasters, the latest season of 'Bridgerton' has left fans awaiting for more. From shocking twists to heartfelt confessions, the drama has many elements. The latest bombshell to rock the high society of 'Bridgerton' revolves around the enigmatic Lady Whistledown, whose true identity has long been

a mystery. While viewers were privy to Penelope Featherington's secret in the first season, the ton remained blissfully unaware.

However, season three brings a stunning turn of events as Cressida Cowper, portrayed by Jessica Madsen, boldly steps forward to claim the coveted title after Queen Charlotte's enticing offer of a reward. Speaking to E!

News, Jessica Madsen revealed insights into her character's motivations, describing Cressida as "a mixed bag" who sets fire to the establishment.

Meanwhile, Nicola Coughlan, known for her portrayal of Penelope Featherington, lauded the twist, likening Cressida to "an evil butterfly" with her mesmerizing portrayal. — ANI

ECONOMY WORLD

PM Modi embarks to Italy for G7 Summit, first overseas visit after assuming office for third term



Prime Minister Modi, in his departure statement, said that he is glad that his first state visit in third consecutive term is to Italy for the G7 Summit. **PHOTO: ANI**

PM Modi emphasized the commitment to enhancing the strategic partnership between India and Italy, with a focus on cooperation in the Indo-Pacific and the Mediterranean regions.

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday embarked on a trip to Italy to take part in G7 Outreach Summit, marking his first trip abroad after assuming office for the third consecutive term.

Prime Minister Modi, in his departure statement, said that he is glad that his first state visit in third consecutive term is to Italy for the G7 Summit.

He recalled his previous visit to Italy and Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni's visits to India which

have contributed significantly to enhancing bilateral ties.

"I am glad that my first visit in the third consecutive term is to Italy for the G-7 Summit. I warmly recall my visit to Italy for the G20 Summit in 2021. Prime Minister Meloni's two visits to India last year were instrumental in infusing momentum and depth in our bilateral agenda. We remain committed to consolidate the India-Italy strategic partnership, and bolster cooperation in

the Indo-Pacific and the Mediterranean regions," PM Modi said. The Italian Prime Minister had invited PM Modi for G7 Outreach Summit. It will be India's 11th participation in the G7 Summit and PM Modi's fifth consecutive participation at the G7 Summit. On the sidelines, PM Modi is expected to hold bilateral meetings with leaders attending the Summit. PM Modi is also expected to hold a bilateral meeting with his Italian counterpart. — ANI

SUMMARIES: ECON

Japan enacts law ensuring access to third-party apps

JAPAN on Wednesday enacted legislation to ensure tech giants like Google and Apple give access to third-party smartphone apps and payment systems on their platforms or risk major fines.

Similar to the European Union's new Digital Markets Act, the law mandates that they act fairly and make operating systems, browsers and search engines available for all.

Behaviour deemed anti-competitive will see operators fined 20 per cent of their revenue in Japan for each offending service, rising to 30 per cent if they do not stop.

"The EU has already taken early steps and implemented new regulations," a Japan Fair Trade Commission statement said.

"For the digital markets of Japan, the United States and Europe to align their efforts and demand fair competition from digital platform operators, a new legal framework is needed in the Japanese market." — AFP

US inflation data unlikely to alter Fed plans to hold rates steady

FRESH US consumer inflation data published Wednesday is unlikely to sway the Federal Reserve, which is widely expected to leave its key lending rate unchanged and lower the number of cuts it has penciled in for this year.

The May headline consumer inflation rate is expected to be little changed from a month earlier, according to the median forecast of economists surveyed by Dow Jones Newswires and The Wall Street Journal. If the analysts are correct, inflation will remain stuck firmly above the Fed's long-term target of two per cent, giving the US central bank an additional incentive to hold rates at a 23-year high of between 5.25 and 5.50 per cent, and wait for the economic winds to change. — AFP

96.4% of Chinese business entities from private sector: official data

Notably, private enterprises dominate the manufacturing sector, representing 96.1% of total companies, up from 95.9% in 2019.

THE number of private business entities in China had reached 180.45 million by the end of May 2024, accounting for 96.4 per cent of the country's total business entities, according to the State Administration for Market Regulation.

This proportion is up from the 95.5 per cent registered in

2019, the administration said, adding that China is now home to nearly 55.18 million private companies and over 125.27 million self-employed businesses.

China's private sector has played a key role in boosting the country's high-tech and emerging industries. In the manufacturing sector, for example,

private businesses currently account for 96.1 per cent of the total manufacturing companies in China, up from 95.9 per cent in 2019. The share of private businesses in the scientific research and technical services sector has risen from 91.9 per cent in 2019 to the current 94.4 per cent. — Xinhua



Robots work on an assembly line of a factory of a private enterprise in Zouping City, east China's Shandong Province, 13 September 2023. **PHOTO: GUO XULEI/XINHUA**

**NEWS IN
BRIEF:BIZ**

**Ford says to cut
1,600 more jobs at
Valencia factory**

US carmaker Ford on Friday said it would seek to cut another 1,600 jobs at its factory near Valencia in eastern Spain, where it already axed 1,100 positions last year.

"At the factory, there is currently a surplus of around 1,600 employees," a spokesman for Ford Spain told AFP after management met unions to outline their plan.

Of that figure, the car giant said 626 would be "permanent redundancies" while the other 966 would be dismissals with the possibility of being rehired in 2027" when production of a new vehicle begins. The UGT union said the redundancy would affect a total of 1,622 staff at the Almussafes plant which lies about 20 kilometres (12 miles) south of Valencia. — AFP

**Wholesale
inflation in India
rises to 2.62%**

THE rate of wholesale inflation in India rose to 2.62 per cent in May from 1.26 per cent in April, according to data released by the federal Ministry of Commerce and Industry on Friday.

"Positive rate of inflation in May 2024 is primarily due to increase in prices of food articles, manufacture of food products, crude petroleum and natural gas, mineral oils, other manufacturing etc.," the ministry said. — Xinhua

**Algeria's Sonatrach
signs hydrocarbon
exploitation deal
with Chevron**

ALGERIAN energy giant Sonatrach and the US Chevron FEA International Ventures Ltd, on Thursday signed an agreement on developing hydrocarbon resources in the Algerian oil and gas basins of Ahnet and Berkine.

The agreement was signed in the presence of Sonatrach CEO Rachid Hachichi and Chevron's Vice-President of Global Exploration Liz Schwarze, Sonatrach said in a statement. — Xinhua

**8th China-Eurasia Expo set for 26-30 June
in Xinjiang**

The international exhibition zone will highlight socioeconomic development, investment opportunities, and cooperation projects across various countries.

THE 8th China-Eurasia Expo is scheduled to be held from 26 to 30 June in northwest China's Xinjiang, according to China's Ministry of Commerce (MOC).

The MOC said that the expo will cover an area of 140,000 square metres with four major exhibition zones covering investment cooperation, international exhibition, special industries, and equipment manufacturing.

The special industries exhibition zone will feature sectors such as energy, digital technology, cultural tourism, green organic fruits and vegetables, high-quality livestock products, as well as cotton and textiles. The international exhibition zone, meanwhile, focuses on the socioeconomic development, investment opportunities and cooperation projects in different countries, among others, according to the MOC. Since 2011, the China-Eurasia Expo has successfully held seven sessions



An exhibitor arranges traditional hats of Kazakh ethnic group at the seventh China-Eurasia Expo in Urumqi, northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, 21 September 2022. **PHOTO: DING LEI/XINHUA**

yielding fruitful results. During the past expos, more than 12,200 domestic and foreign exhibitors from more than 70 countries and

regions exhibited, and it attracted a total of 2.16 million visitors. The expos led to a number of exemplary cooperation achieve-

ments, promoted China-Eurasia economic and trade cooperation, and enhanced people-to-people exchanges. — Xinhua

**New Balance expands presence in Mumbai
with new store at Infiniti Mall, Malad**



New Balance, a rapidly expanding sports brand globally, recently inaugurated its latest store at Infiniti Mall, Malad, marking its second opening in Mumbai within a month. **PHOTO: ANI**

AFTER the successful launch of its store at Linking Road earlier in May, New Balance, one of the world's fastest-growing sports brand, recently opened

its newest store in the city at Infiniti Mall, Malad.

This is the brand's second launch in Mumbai in less than a month, further emphasizing on

The store, following the successful launch at Linking Road earlier in May, reinforces New Balance's dedication to promoting sports and delivering high-quality craftsmanship to its customers.

the strategic expansion plans for New Balance in India.

The New Balance store highlights the brand's commitment to empower people through sports and quality craftsmanship.

The store boasts a carefully curated collection of performance & lifestyle products, within a dynamic retail experience, featuring some of the brand's popular technologies like Fresh Foam X and FuelCell.

One can also see some of New Balance's iconic lifestyle models, 9060, 1906, 2002R and the 550 at this new store.

Radeshwer Davar, Country Manager, New Balance India expressed his excitement for the new store, stating: "It has been an exciting month for us in Mumbai. Following the successful launch of our first store, we are thrilled to announce the opening of a second store within a month. — ANI

ROLLING UPDATES

WORLD

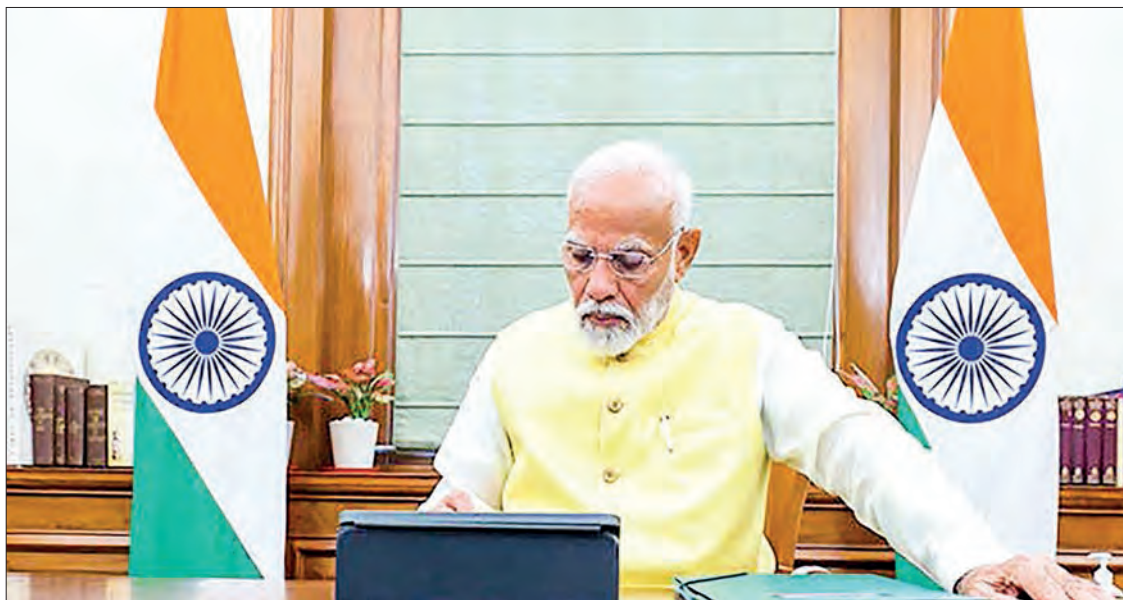
G7 Outreach Summit an opportunity to deliberate issues crucial for Global South: PM Modi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed his satisfaction in starting his third consecutive term with a visit to Italy for the G-7 Summit.

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi said on Thursday that he is glad that his first visit in the third consecutive term is to Italy for the G-7 Summit and noted that the India is committed to consolidate its strategic partnership with Italy and bolster cooperation in the Indo-Pacific and the Mediterranean regions.

PM Modi is travelling to Apulia region in Italy to participate in the G7 Outreach Summit on 14 June at the invitation of Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni.

In his departure statement ahead of his visit, PM Modi said that G7 Outreach Summit an



PM Modi emphasized that the summit presents an opportunity to discuss critical issues for the Global South, with a focus on artificial intelligence, energy, Africa, and the Mediterranean. **PHOTO: ANI**

opportunity to deliberate on issues crucial for Global South. He said focus would be on artificial intelligence, energy, Africa, and the Mediterranean during the discussions.

“It will be an opportunity to bring greater synergy between the outcomes of the G20 Summit held under India’s Presidency and the forthcoming G7 Summit, and deliberate on issues which are crucial for the Global South,” he said.

PM Modi said he is looking forward to meeting other leaders participating in the Summit.

It will be India’s 11th participation in the G7 Summit and PM Modi’s fifth consecutive participation at the G7 Summit.

The G7 Summit in Italy is being held on 13 and 14 June. — ANI

S African parliament meets to re-elect weakened ANC president

In South Africa, the newly-elected parliament is convening to re-elect President Cyril Ramaphosa, as the ruling African National Congress (ANC) forms an unprecedented coalition government.

SOUTH Africa’s newly-elected parliament meets Friday and is expected to re-elect President Cyril Ramaphosa to form an unprecedented coalition government after his ruling ANC cobbled together a coalition deal. The African National Congress leader had

called for a government of national unity after his party lost its absolute majority in last month’s general election, but two major leftist parties shunned the deal.

Instead, according to ANC secretary-general Fikile Mbalula, the government would “grav-

itate to the centre” — backed by the centre-right Democratic Alliance (DA), the Zulu nationalist Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) and several smaller parties.

“We have reached a breakthrough on the common agreement that we need to work together,” Mbalula told a news conference in Cape Town, confirming that the radical leftist Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) had refused to join what he still called a unity government. Graft-tainted former president Jacob Zuma’s new electoral vehicle, the uMkhonto weSizwe (MK), has disputed the 29 May election results and warned it would boycott Friday’s sitting of the 400-member assembly. Mbalula said the ANC was talking to MK, but had not reached agreement. — AFP



ANC leaders reached a coalition deal with other parties. **PHOTO: AFP**

NEWS IN BRIEF

California university moves classes online after demonstrations over conflict in Gaza

CALIFORNIA State University, Los Angeles (Cal State LA), in the western US state of California, announced on Thursday that all classes and operations on the university’s main campus will be held remotely until further notice after a night of demonstrations over the ongoing Israel-Hamas conflict in Gaza.

“Please do not come to main campus,” the Los Angeles school noted in a protest action alert on its website.

A group of pro-Palestinian protesters took over the university’s student services building, which includes the office of the university’s president, on Wednesday afternoon. Some school administrators were reportedly trapped inside the building after the university urged employees to shelter in place.

Social media posts showed protesters fortifying their barricades outside the building at night as they waited for President of Cal State LA Berenecea Johnson Eanes to negotiate with them. — Xinhua

Huthi missile attack severely injures sailor on cargo ship: US military

TWO cruise missiles launched by Yemen’s Huthi rebels struck a bulk cargo carrier in the Gulf of Aden on Thursday, severely injuring a sailor who was evacuated by American forces, the US military said.

The Huthis have been targeting vessels in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden since November 2023 in attacks they say are in solidarity with Palestinians during the ongoing Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip.

Although this has caused major disruption to international shipping, casualties have been rare. — AFP

SPORTS

ONE Friday Fights 67: Moe Htet Aung defeats Kazuki Yamagishi via split decision

MYANMAR fighter Moe Htet Aung smashed Japanese fighter Kazuki Yamagishi by a split decision during the thrilling Muay Thai showdown named ONE Friday Fights 67 held in the Lumpini boxing stadium, Bangkok, Thailand, yesterday.

The young Myanmar fighter bravely fought against Kazuki from Japan and was undefeated for three rounds but won by a points decision. Although they were slightly different in height, both of them were able to punch each other without any difference in skill.

Starting from the second round, Moe Htet Aung was able to punch his opponent with a skill advantage and won because of punches, kicks and knees that could be scored. Moe Htet Aung has won both fights since his partnership with ONE Championship. — Shine Htet Zaw/KZL



The referee declares Myanmar's Moe Htet Aung as the winner after his fight against Kazuki Yamagishi. **PHOTO: ONE CHAMPIONSHIP**

Japanese Kazuki Yamagishi (right) lands the knee on Myanmar's Moe Htet Aung during the ONE Friday Fights 67 event held in the Lumpini boxing stadium, Bangkok, Thailand, on 14 June 2024. **PHOTO: ONE CHAMPIONSHIP**



Lewandowski 'probably' fit for Poland's second Euros game, says coach

THE celebrated marksman's status will be on every fan's mind going into the opening match of the competition, following the injury sustained on the last warm-up match.

Robert Lewandowski will "probably" be fit to play in Poland's second Euro 2024 match against Austria in Berlin next week, coach Michal Probiez said on Friday.

The Barcelona striker suffered a thigh injury in Monday's 2-1 friendly win over Türkiye and will miss Poland's opening Group D game against the Netherlands in Hamburg on Sunday.

But Probiez is hopeful Lewandowski, Poland's all-time record goalscorer, will be back to face Austria on 21 June, contrary to some media reports claiming he could struggle to play any part in the group phase.

"Robert will probably join the team for the match against Austria," said Probiez.

"I'm surprised when I read comments that it's impossible when a muscle is torn. There are different degrees of such an injury. There is progress in his treatment, the medical staff are doing everything to get him back on his feet. — AFP

Bodybuilding & Physique Contest marking Olympic Day to be held on 22 June

A Bodybuilding and Physique Contest commemorating the Olympic Day will be launched at the Myanmar Convention Centre-MCC in Yangon on 22 June, as stated by the Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs.

Winners of former men's professional bodybuilding contests, men's junior bodybuilding contests, men's senior bodybuilding contests ranging from 45 to 60-year-old, amateur bodybuilding contests, upper 70-kilogramme men's bodybuilding contests, men's athletic physique, men's sports physique, men's fitness physique (open), women's model physique, women's athletic physique, women's fitness physique (open) are allowed to compete in this contest.

The Bodybuilding and Physique Contest is organized by Sports and Physical Education Department under the



Female bodybuilders show off their muscles during the 47th Inter-State and Region Bodybuilding and Physique Championship. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs, and Sports Federation to commemorate the Myanmar Bodybuilding and Physique upcoming Olympic Day. — TWA/KZL

Spain keeps top spot in FIFA women's ranking



Aitana Bonmati (far right) scored twice the last time Spain played Denmark. **PHOTO: GONZALO ARROYO/UEFA/FILE**

SPAIN stayed atop the newly released FIFA Women's World Ranking on Friday.

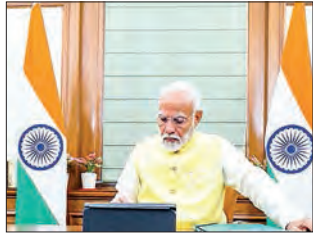
France moved up one spot to the second place while England was pushed down to the third when UEFA Women's EURO 2025 qualifiers were played.

The top ten teams also include

Germany, the United States, Sweden, Japan, Canada, Brazil and the DPR Korea in sequence.

Spain is one of the six national teams that collected its highest-ever points on the ranking. The other five teams are North Macedonia, Zambia, Puerto Rico, El Salvador and DR Congo. China is ranked 19th.

The next ranking will be published on 16 August 2024. — Xinhua



WORLD

SAD ABOUT WAR

Million-plus begin hajj pilgrimage under shadow of Gaza war

MORE than a million Muslim pilgrims were in Mecca Friday for the start of a hajj pilgrimage held against the grim backdrop of the Gaza war and in exhausting summer heat.

Crowds of robed worshippers will circle the Kaaba, the black cubic structure at Mecca's Grand Mosque, with many expressing sadness eight months into the Israel-Hamas war.

"Our brothers are dying, and we can see it with our own eyes," a tearful 75-year-old Zahra Benizahra from Morocco told AFP.

Belinda Elham of Indonesia, which has the world's largest Muslim population, said she would "pray every day so that what's happening in Palestine ends".

Saudi King Salman issued a decree on Monday to host 1,000 pilgrims "from the families of martyrs and the wounded from the Gaza Strip", bringing to 2,000 the number of Palestinian pilgrims to be given the special honour at this year's hajj, the official Saudi Press Agency reported. — AFP



Leaders of the G7 pose for a group photo with the skydiving flag performers at Borgo Egnazia, near the town of Fasano in Apulia Region, Italy, on 13 June 2024. The three-day 2024 Group of Seven (G7) summit kicked off Thursday in Borgo Egnazia, a resort near the town of Fasano in southern Italy's Apulia region, amid protests. PHOTO: LI JING/XINHUA

G7 summit opens amid protests

THE three-day 2024 Group of Seven (G7) summit kicked off Thursday in Borgo Egnazia, a resort near the town of Fasano in southern Italy's Apulia region, amid protests.

The crises in Ukraine and the Middle East and the relations with the Global South top the agenda of the summit. The management of artificial intelligence (AI), issues facing Africa and climate change are also included in the key sessions.

Italy is holding the G7 rotating presidency this year. In addition to the G7 leaders, heads of state from over ten other countries and international organizations were invited to attend the conference.

On the first day, the group discussed a draft deal for a 50-billion-US dollar loan to Ukraine, using frozen Russian assets as guarantees.

In her latest response Thursday, Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria

The summit's focus includes crises in Ukraine and the Middle East, relations with the Global South, and managing artificial intelligence (AI), alongside discussions on Africa's challenges and climate change.

Zakharova said that G7's plans will not benefit the West and may result in new economic crisis.

The United States and Japan each

signed security agreements with Ukraine, making them the last two G7 members to sign such pacts.

Protests against the G7 summit are taking place in many places near the venue. On the opening day, in Brindisi, a city 60 kilometres away from the venue, protesters held Palestinian flags and displayed banners with slogans such as "Boycott the G7", "Stop Destroying the Planet", and "No More War". They criticized the G7 for failing to play a positive role in environmental protection, social justice, and maintaining peace.

Lukas Hufert, an art student from Germany, travelled to participate in the protest. He told Xinhua that the G7's handling of international affairs is "full of hypocrisy", likening it to a Trojan horse that appears grand but is filled with selfish schemes inside, "offering no help to the world's vulnerable groups". — Xinhua



A model of Bushehr nuclear power plant is on display in an exhibition of the Iran's nuclear achievements during the "International Conference on Nuclear Science and Technology" in the central city of Isfahan in Iran on 6 May 2024. PHOTO: VAHID SALEMI, AP/FILE

Iran expands nuclear capacities further: IAEA

IRAN is further expanding its nuclear capacities, the International Atomic Energy Agency said Thursday, one week after the agency's board of governors passed a resolution criticizing Tehran's lack of cooperation with the UN nuclear watchdog.

The IAEA informed its members that Tehran told the agency it was installing more cascades at the enrichment facilities in Natanz and Fordow, according to a statement sent to AFP.

A cascade is a series of centrifuges, machines used in the process of enriching

uranium. A diplomatic source deemed this development as "moderate".

The motion brought by Britain, France and Germany — but opposed by China and Russia — at the IAEA's 35-nation board last week was the first of its kind since November 2022.

The resolution — which Tehran slammed as "hasty and unwise" — came amid an impasse over Iran's escalating nuclear activities and as Western powers fear Tehran may be seeking to develop a nuclear weapon, a claim Iran denies. — AFP